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# NEWS AND NOTES

In the August number of *Phytopathology,* L. L. Harter describes *Plenodomus destruens,* a fungus causing "foot-rot" of sweet potato. A more complete account of the disease appeared in the *Journal of Agricultural Research* for December.

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A recent paper by Hauch and Ravn on Oidium in the oak forests of Denmark describes the appearance and effects of the disease, the checking of growth and the lessening of resistance to cold, and suggests potassium sulfid solution as a remedy, but one that is unsuited to forest conditions by reason of the labor and expense involved.

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Bulletin No. 355 of Cornell University treats of the apple scab disease, caused by the fungus *Venturia inaequalis* (Cooke) Winter. The paper which is by Errett Wallace contains in addition to a detailed study of the fungus, also a history of the distribution and economic importance of the disease. Also considerable space is devoted to a discussion of the means of controlling it.

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In the June number of *Phytopathology,* J. J. Taubenhaus describes *Sclerotium bataticola,* a fungus causing "charcoal-rot" of sweet potato. This was formerly thought to be a state of *Sphaeronema fimbriata* (Ellis & Halst.) Sacc., but it has been proven conclusively by Taubenhaus that it is not. No other fruiting stage could be found for the fungus except the sclerotia, which are produced in large numbers.

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Dr. F. D. Heald, of the Laboratory of Forest Pathology, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, visited the Garden on February 4 and 5 to consult certain types of fungi in the Ellis Collection. He has discovered some very interesting diseases of trees in connection with his work on the chestnut canker, and the results of his studies will shortly be published.

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The January number of the *Journal of Heredity* contains three of the best popular articles yet published on the chestnut canker. Dr. Metcalf gives its history and characteristics, with a strong argument for careful inspection of future importations of nursery stock of all kinds; while Mr. Van Fleet and Dr. Morris tell of immune strains and resistant hybrids that may save the chestnut to horticulture if not to forestry.

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The fifth annual meeting of the American Phytopathological Society was held at Atlanta, Georgia, from December 30, 1913, to January 3, 1914. The full program was completed with more than usual dispatch and opportunity was afforded for valuable discussion of the papers, owing to the method recently adopted of preparing a printed abstract of each paper in advance and presenting the papers in the form of abstracts only. As these have been widely distributed among mycologists already, they will not be repeated here.

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A box of truffles was sent to the Garden last autumn for our examination, with a note requesting information regarding their food value. Later, the sender of this material made a visit here and stated that the truffles had been collected in the vicinity of New York through the aid of a trained dog imported from Italy. The specimens were filed away in the herbarium for later study. In November, a second package of these fungi was received which was said to have been collected in New Jersey. A microscopic examination of these plants showed them to be two different species. Later, a third collection of the plants was sent for examination, which collection was found to contain some examples of both of the species previously sent. These plants were of especial interest to us since they represent the only two specimens of the genus *Tuber* in our collection from America.

Three species of *Tuber* have been previously reported from the eastern United States, none of which accord well, so far as we can judge from the published accounts, with the two recently collected. The identity of the two recent collections has not been determined with certainty, but the specimens are kept for further study. The indications are that this genus may be well represented in the eastern United States.

In his work on underground fungi occurring in California, Harkness reports thirteen species of *Tuber,* but all of them are so rare as to be of little economic value. Harkness did not find any of the species of truffles usually eaten in Italy, but *Tuber californica* approaches very nearly to one of these Italian species. In addition to *Tuber,* a number of other genera of underground fungi contain edible species.

## AGARICUS MUCIFER Berk. & Mont.

While examining recently the type specimens of fungi collected by Sullivant in Ohio and now preserved in the Montagne herbarium in Paris, I made a special effort to connect *Agaricus* (*Tricholoma*) *mucifer* Berk. & Mont. Syll. Crypt. 99. 1856 with some species of the genus at present known. The description of the species is as follows:

> Pileus fleshy, convex to expanded, center depressed, 12 cm. broad; surface reddish-alutaceous, very viscid, glabrous; flesh incarnate or rosy; lamellae emarginate-decurrent, subconcolorous, white, red-spotted, changing to reddish on drying; spores oblong, apiculate, white; stipe stout, short, bulbous, fibrillose-striate, rufobadious, solid, 6 cm. long, 2 cm. thick at the apex, 3 cm. thick at the base; veil white, fibrillose, joined to margin of young pileus.

This description applies to a plant near *Tricholoma transmutans* or *Tricholoma Russula.* The type specimens are rather confusing. One packet, marked No. 274, has Sullivant's original number tied to the specimens. In this packet, there are two plants, one with bulbous stipe and purplish-red surface, which is evidently the type and is very near *Tricholoma Russula,* the other plant practically white and evidently Montagne's *Clitocybe* *leiphaemia,* also collected by Sullivant in Ohio. The spores of the typical specimens are ovoid to ellipsoid, pointed at one end, smooth, hyaline, granular, 6–7 × 3–4 μ.

Another packet bearing the same number and named *A. mucifer* by Montagne contains still another species. There are in it two old and insect-eaten specimens with slender stipe, thin, crowded lamellae, and pale-purple surface, fading toward the margin. They resemble *Tricholoma Russula,* but are thinner and have a much longer stipe. The spores are broadly ellipsoid to globose, smooth, hyaline, granular, 7 × 6–6.5 μ. It is very evident that Montagne had difficulty in distinguishing species in the dried state and that the various species we have of the group represented by *Tricholoma Russula* and *Tricholoma transmutans* were confusing to him as they are to us. It is highly desirable that fresh specimens of this group be collected and carefully compared with Montagne's description of *A. mucifer.*

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